

*CLAIM AMENDMENTS*

1-20. (Canceled)

21. (Original) A chemical-mechanical polishing composition comprising:

- (a) silica particles,
- (b) about  $5 \times 10^{-3}$  to about 10 mmol/kg of at least one alkaline earth metal selected from the group consisting of calcium, strontium, and mixtures thereof, based on the total weight of the polishing composition, and
- (c) a liquid carrier comprising water,

wherein the polishing composition has a pH of about 7 to about 13.

22-23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) The polishing composition of claim 21[23], wherein the polishing composition further comprises an oxidizing agent.

25-29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently Amended) The polishing composition of claim 21[29], wherein the polishing composition further comprises a corrosion inhibitor selected from the group consisting of 1,2,3-triazole, 1,2,4-triazole, benzotriazole, benzimidazole, benzothiazole, and mixtures thereof.

31. (Currently Amended) The polishing composition of claim 21[30], wherein the polishing composition further comprises a complexing or chelating agent.

32-38. (Canceled)

39. (Currently Amended) The polishing composition of claim 24[37], wherein the oxidizing agent is present in the polishing composition in an amount of about 0.5 to about 8 wt.% based on the total weight of the polishing composition.

40-41. (Canceled)

42. (Original) The polishing composition of claim 21, wherein the polishing composition further comprises an acid, and the acid is an organic acid selected from the group consisting of oxalic acid, malic acid, malonic acid, tartaric acid, acetic acid, lactic acid, propionic acid, phthalic acid, benzoic acid, citric acid, succinic acid, salts thereof, and combinations thereof.

43-63. (Canceled)

64. (Original) A method of polishing a substrate comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a substrate,
- (b) providing a chemical-mechanical polishing composition comprising:
  - (i) silica particles,
  - (ii) about  $5 \times 10^{-3}$  to about 10 mmoles/kg of at least one alkaline earth metal selected from the group consisting of calcium, strontium, and mixtures thereof, based on the total weight of the polishing composition, and
  - (iii) a liquid carrier comprising water,wherein the polishing composition has a pH of about 7 to about 13,
- (c) applying the chemical-mechanical polishing composition to at least a portion of the substrate, and
- (d) abrading at least a portion of the substrate with the polishing composition to polish the substrate.

65. (Original) The method of claim 64, wherein the substrate comprises tantalum or tantalum nitride, and at least a portion of the tantalum or tantalum nitride is abraded with the polishing composition to polish the substrate.

66-73. (Canceled)

74. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 64[73], wherein the polishing composition further comprises a corrosion inhibitor selected from the group consisting of 1,2,3-triazole, 1,2,4-triazole, benzotriazole, benzimidazole, benzothiazole, and mixtures thereof.

75. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 64[74], wherein the polishing composition further comprises a complexing or chelating agent.

76-80. (Canceled)

81. (Original) The method of claim 64, wherein the polishing composition further comprises an oxidizing agent.

82. (Canceled)

83. (Original) The method of claim 81, wherein the oxidizing agent is present in the polishing composition in an amount of about 0.5 to about 8 wt.% based on the total weight of the polishing composition.

84-85. (Canceled)

86. (Original) The method of claim 64, wherein the polishing composition further comprises an acid, and the acid is an organic acid selected from the group consisting of oxalic acid, malic acid, malonic acid, tartaric acid, acetic acid, lactic acid, propionic acid, phthalic acid, benzoic acid, citric acid, succinic acid, salts thereof, and combinations thereof.

87-92. (Canceled)